



Midewin National Tallgrass Prairie

30239 South State Route 53, Wilmington, IL 60481

Phone: 815-423-6370

Web: <http://www.fs.usda.gov/midewin>

Volunteer Activities

Conservation Educator – An important part of Midewin's mission is to provide opportunities for environmental learning. Students of all ages, from early elementary to college, come to Midewin to participate in environmental education activities and conservation service projects. For many of these students, a trip to Midewin may be their first outdoor learning experience. Volunteer educators assist by leading small group discovery activities and supervising stewardship activities such as planting, seed harvest, and invasive plant removal.

Prairie Restoration Assistant – Restoration volunteers work in the native seed beds planting, weeding, mulching and harvesting seed. Cleaning seed, planting plug trays, clearing encroaching shrubs from prairie and herbiciding are other tasks that you can find restoration volunteers performing. Restoration volunteer days are scheduled on every Thursday and occasional Saturdays year round. Check the website for a calendar of events.

Ecological Monitors – Monitoring is an important part of the restoration process. Land managers need to know the health of plant and animal populations in an area before, during, and after a restoration project. Volunteer monitors, working independently or with Midewin staff, collect and record data on specific plant or animal populations using scientifically based methods. This data is used to plan and evaluate each restoration area. Existing Midewin monitoring programs include birds, frogs, butterflies, streams, rare plants and floristic quality in restored areas.

Interpreters – Volunteer Interpreters work with staff to deliver programs via escorted tours; bike and horse rides; hikes; and special programs. These programs are designed to promote awareness; knowledge and understanding of the natural and cultural history of Midewin; to provide insight into the native habitat restoration process; and to promote the mission of the US Forest Service. Welcome Center Host duties include meeting and greeting visitors, answering questions and distributing information about Midewin. Responsibilities also include handling gift shop sales. This position is great for outgoing volunteers that don't mind being indoors for a 4 or 8 hour shift.

Trail Maintenance/Stewards – Midewin's trail systems are being extended and improved every year. Recreation sites such as trailheads, picnic sites, accessible viewing platforms, and interpretive waysides are being developed. Trail maintenance volunteers, working in teams or with Midewin staff will perform routine maintenance on these trails and facilities. Maintenance activities may include mowing; brush removal and herbiciding; repairing bridges and other structures; installing signs, benches, and tables; and other tasks all intended to contribute to a quality recreation experience and ensure public health and safety. Trail stewards are assigned designated sections to monitor for safety and manage the trail surface and 10 foot areas to each side.

PLEASE CONTACT THE VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR FOR MORE INFORMATION

Allison Cisneros
Midewin National Tallgrass Prairie
30239 S State Route 53
Wilmington, IL



The Nature Conservancy
Office at U.S. Forest Service, Midewin
Volunteer Coordinator

Office: 815.423.2149
Cell: 815.474.3808
E-mail: amcisneros@fs.fed.us

